

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, August 27, 1900, with transcript

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL TO MABEL (Hubbard) BELL Hotel Cecil, Strand, W. C.
August 27, 1900. My darling little wifie:

I feel almost like turning back. I am so afraid of leaving you all alone in Paris — especially as I hear, quite privately and confidentially, (from an Englishman) — that England is to be invaded by the French in November! What do you think of that! However, let us hope that I may be back before war is declared and rescue you all. My English travelling-companion informed me that England had boycotted the Paris Exhibition on account of the outrageous cartoons of Queen Victoria published in France. He said one of them represented Kruger spanking Queen Victoria in the old school-boy fashion without particular regard to the way her clothes were arranged!!

Other cartoons were still worse and of such coarseness as to defy description.

By the by — the invalid lady on the train turned out to be insane — the old lady with her was her mother and my young ladies were evidently attendants. At Calaisville the poor lady insisted on getting out and going to a hotel and called the conductor. He, however, could not speak English nor she French. Looking out of my compartment I saw that something was wrong and went on to the platform to investigate. The lady at once appealed to me as an Englishman (!) to help her — offered me her cheque-book — and altogether spoke so incoherently as to show me she was insane. The rest of her party sat quietly in their seats and made no remark excepting that the old lady told me she was the mother of the other — a statement which the insane lady did not contradict — so I felt that I better retire so as not to excite the patient too much by giving her an English-speaking person to talk to.

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At Calais the poor lady barred the door and for a long time would not let the others out — or permit the porters to remove the hand-bags and etc. The others were very patient with her and at last prevailed upon her to leave the car and enter the steam-boat. I saw nothing further of them after leaving Dover.

Had a very comfortable passage and arrived safely at London. No signs of Mr. or Mrs. Ackers. Cannot find out here the name of the dock from which my steamer, The “Ulunda” sails. Will leave at ten o'clock with baggage and etc., and call at the agents in Londenhall Street.

By the by — do you think there would be any chance of Mr. McInnis sending Prof. Grosvenor's letter to France before I arrive. If so — you might cable him to hold all mail. He would surely do so if Miss Safford is there — without instructions.

Tell my nice little Ellie to keep a good heart and I will return soon — and not alone.

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Can't! I bring some one for Daidums too? I will bring myself back for you my dear — and now good-bye.

Au revoir to all.

Your loving husband, Alec. Mrs. A. Graham Bell, Paris, France.